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AN OCCASIONAL
LETTER.

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AN OCCASIONAL
LETTER

TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE

H---- P-----, Esq;
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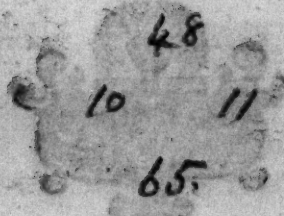
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THE LORDS OF THE



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LETTER, &c.

S I R,

AS great Men sometimes
employ their Intervals
from Business in studying
Books, which display the Con-
duct and Wisdom of those, who
in other Countries filled the like
Stations; give me Leave to re-
commend

commend to your Hours of Leisure, in this Season of settled and unthreatened Security, the *Memoirs of Sully*, which possibly may have lain neglected by you, while the Treaty with *Spain*, and Negotiations in the Empire, justly absorb'd your whole Attention. I 2

If in the present happy Disposition of Men and of Things, Instructions be unnecessary for immediate Service, yet Knowledge of the Past may be an useful Provision for the Future, when the Shiftings of Fortune may break or loosen

loosen the Solidity of this System,
which now promises eternal Du-
ration.

In such Circumstances, and in
such Times, and I would be un-
derstood to mean such only, it will
not be useless to know, that had
Sully been aw'd or deter'd by the
Opposition of his Fellow-servants,
had he hesitated, had he præcrafti-
nated, he might have continued a
Minister subservient to the Pride of
a *Nevers*, to the Brutality of a
Depernon, to the giddy Ambition,
beggarly Wants, and inconstant
Duplicity of a *Soissons*. His

His innate Honesty and Love of *France* might sometimes break forth in faint Sallies and imperfect Good, just sufficient to alarm and confederate the Courtiers against him, but not enough to rivet his Power in the Interest and Favour of his Master. Thus circumstanc'd had he fallen, the Loss would not have been great, and he would have been properly enough replaced by some other of the common Herd which grazes in every Court.

But

But *Sully* was resolute, and by Resolution secured to *France* the best Minister that ever blessed any Country. He pointed out the Way, and cleared the Obstructions for those who succeeded him. *Richlieu* confesses the Obligation, and had *Sully* not prevail'd, in laying the Foundations, it is more than probable that such a Superstructure would not have been ais'd, as is since become formidable to *Europe*.

B

His

His Story is a great and never-to-be-forgotten Instance of what one Man may avail, in an almost universal Conspiracy against a Country, distressed and exhausted beyond any apparent Possibility of Relief. But *Sully* defeated Conspiracies. That headstrong Obstinacy in the great Ones about Court, by which every thing was obtain'd, and to which every thing was wont to yield in former Reigns, and did yield in the subsequent Minority, lost its Force. That Succedaneum to Merit, and
 which,

which, in degenerate Times, answers to the Possessor all its lucrative Purposes, that spurious huffing Fortitude, strong only against Weakness and Fear, submitted to Firmness founded in Virtue. *Sully* was obstinate too, and his Obstinacy, like the Wand in *Aaron's* Hand, proved its divine Energy in the Monarch's Presence, against a Band of baffled and pretended wise Men.

Sully, it is true, was supported by his Master. He was upheld by him whose Inclinations he

thwarted, whose Will he opposed, whose Passions he stemm'd in their wildest Fury. But *Henry* knew him honest, *Henry* knew him faithful. Every such Incident which inflamed the Monarch's Repentment, became, in cooler Moments, a new Proof of the insuperable Fidelity which expos'd the Servant to its Effects.

He dared to prefer his Master's *Glory to his Pleasures, and his People's Happiness to his Repose*: And when upbraided by him with this

Pre-

Preference, he dared confess it, nay he triumphed in the Charge.

Henry was suspicious, credulous, and passionate ; of a Nature easily kindled by Anger and by Love. And he was environ'd by Sycophants, Parasites, and Women, who hated *Sully*, and were hated by Him. These magnified his Gains, depreciated his Services, and threw out Insinuations of Designs pernicious to the Government.

But *Henry* cou'd account for every Livre that compos'd his
private

private Fortune. If this was affluent, it was the Produce of his own Bounty, and *Sully* boasted of the Reward, while, in return, a full Exchequer, an ample Revenue, abundant Stores, well-regulated Establishments, and Taxes easily levell'd and cheerfully paid, rendered the Monarch and the People easy in Peace, and prepared for War.

His Conduct towards Parties was such as made him unacceptable to the Zealots on both Sides; and he whose Ruin the Jesuit plotted

plotted as a determin'd Enemy, the
seditious *Calvinist* considered as a
cool and hollow Friend.

Those Facts spoke stronger than
the invenom'd Whisper of Calumny
and Detraction. Or if these, in
the Weakness and Frailty of Nature,
were a while attended to, if *Sully*
felt some times those Vicissitudes
to which they at all times are sub-
ject, who unhappily depend upon
the Will of one Man, they were
few, and of short Duration, as if only
calculated to render the return of
Favour stronger, adding a Repen-
tance

tance of Injury to a Gratitude for Service.

If there have been few *Henries*, there have been as few *Sullies*; more such Ministers might possibly have increased the Number of such Masters. And he only has a Right to complain of the Want of such a Supporter, who pursues the same Methods to convince him of a like disinterested Attachment.

If the most amorous Monarch that ever sat upon a Throne, declared to the fairest Mistress that
 ever

ever abused such a Monarch's Affections, that *he had rather part from ten such as she was, than give up one Minister like Sully.* He knew them both ; and Esteem of personal Worth, and Regard for publick Interest, in that Instance, (and they wou'd have operated still stronger in any other) inclined the Scale to the faithful Servant, against the selfish and beloved Concubine.

But had the same Dispositions been suspected in each, had one been thought to serve from the

C

same

same Motives that prostituted the other, Nature would have prevail'd, and it would have prevail'd altho' the Call had been weaker; he would have fallen a Victim to that Monarch's Infirmities, who was exalted by his Wisdom and his Virtues.

It may be true, that in this Country the Difficulties which arise in the Way of an honest Minister, are not so easily removed, as under those Governments where arbitrary Power arms with irresistible Force the Delegate of Sovereign Will and

Plea-

Pleasure. And certain it is, that to unite the Views, the Temper, and Dispositions of the *many*, with whom, and by whom, an *English* Minister must act, and to direct these various Combinations to great, and good, and national Purposes, is a Talent more particularly necessary in this Country of Freedom, where Address in leading the Will must supply the Want of Means to compel it.

But altho' in a System thus composed, Imperfections must be admitted, arising from the Matter out of

which it is formed, and altho' the wisest and most honest Man that ever held the Reins of Administration, must do, and suffer to be done, Things contrary to his Inclinations and Judgment, yet these are only partial Evils, delaying, or rendering less compleat, but never totally defeating, the Good of the Publick. Enough will appear to vindicate the general Design in its Progress, and the final Issue will demonstrate the Honesty and Wisdom of the Direction.

But

But should a Minister, instead of uniting others and drawing them to him, unite himself with them ; separate and unconnected among Themselves ; influenced, not influencing ; directed, not directing ; supporting, not supported. However brave, however moderate, however wise, however humane and disinterested the private Man may be, the Minister will be timorous with the Fearful, rash with the Enterprising, severe with the Cruel, weak with the Foolish, and corrupt alike with the Sordid and the Lavish, whose Wants he must supply, and

and whose Cravings he must serve.
 And if upon any Occasion, where
 many are Competitors for the same
 Thing, *one* must be prefer'd, more
 Things must be found at the Ex-
 pence of the Publick to atone for
 that Preference, and to satisfy the
 Disappointment; while impracti-
 cable Claims will be urged, that
 unreasonable Discontents may be
 appeased, and the Nation must pay,
 for broken Measures and discordant
 Councils, more than the full Re-
 ward of efficient Merit and effec-
 tual Service.

Our

Our political System would thus become a Compound of every jarring Atom, of every human Vice and Infirmary ; and however such a Frame might be the Result of Chance, or of still blinder Ignorance, it can only be preserved by that Hand which brought an Universe out of Nothing, and wrought its Salvation out of Sin and Death.

Thus, Sir, I have drawn a short Sketch, more to excite your Curiosity, than to inform your Judgment.

It

It was necessary to augment the Features, as it is placed at a Distance from us. May it ever remain so! Nearer to the Eye it would be hideous, and yet there are Evils, into which Ministerial Office, in a free Country, is as apt to degenerate, and from the same Causes, as Liberty into Licentiousness, or constitutional Privileges into unconstitutional Aristocracy.

F I N I S.



